Alsia Californica Sull. var. *flagellifera*.—California (Miss Mann).
Eurhynchium strigosum B. S. var. *Barnesii*.—Idaho (Leiberg).
Plagiothecium denticulatum B. S. var. *microcarpum*.—Idaho (Leiberg).
Amblystegium riparium B. S. var. *serratum*.—Kansas (Henry).
Amblystegium riparium var. *Floridanum*.—Florida (Garber). Louisiana (Langlois).
Hypnum symmetricum (sub-species of *H. uncinatum*).—Idaho (Leiberg). Oregon (Howell).
Hypnum arcuatum Lindb. var. *Americanum*.—Louisiana (Langlois).

Silk seeking pollen.—Director Speer, of the Iowa experiment station, is making some interesting experiments on the fertilization of corn. It is found that the silk will remain green and in a receptive condition and grow in length for a long time if not fertilized. Some silks just measured which have been out nineteen days, but covered to prevent fertilization, are sixteen inches beyond the ear. In one instance a few silks were fertilized the second day after they appeared, and six days later the remainder, two sizes of kernels appearing on the ear. In another case the ear was covered until the silk was well started and then pollenized. Twelve days later it was examined and found to have set almost perfectly, but the kernels toward the base of the ear were the smallest, showing that the longest silks required the most time for fertilization. In ordinary cases the silks from the base of the ear appear much the soonest and the lower kernels become fertilized first. In another case where the outer (lower) silks were cut off and the whole left exposed a greater difference in size between the top and butt kernels appeared. Silks were repeatedly cut off and the ear afterward successfully fertilized, proving that it is not the forked apex of the silk alone that is receptive.

A. A. CROZIER, *Ames, Iowa.*

EDITORIAL.

ANOTHER PROPOSITION was made and considered this year to erect the Botanical Club of the A. A. A. S. into a section, or at least a sub-section. Fortunately, we think, the committee reported adversely to the proposition, after consulting the council and those who have had some experience with similar movements in other sections. We hope that this endeavor will not be renewed. It tends, even when unsuccessful, to exaggerate the importance of the club, and to that extent to interfere with its usefulness.

ANOTHER PROPOSAL which we think would be equally harmful should it be acceded to was that the club request the council to publish its proceedings in the regular volume. The Botanical Club should hardly be formal enough to be said to have "proceedings." It is to be the place

where the short and less important observations can be set before our fellows; where the progress of investigations can be stated and coöperation asked; where movements for the benefit of botanists (such as the Exchange Club) can be initiated; where the botanists can meet informally and become better acquainted. Such were the objects of its founders, and these features it should be our endeavor to preserve. Any attempt to dignify it by adding formalities or limiting its freedom of speech would only ruin it.

AS IT IS, there is a growing tendency to encroach upon the biological section. The sectional committee this year followed the precedent of the past two years, and arranged the programme so that all the botanical papers were read in the morning, and all the zoological in the afternoon. This year the "cutting" of zoological papers by the botanists was more marked than ever. Hardly a corporal's guard was present in the afternoon. The zoologists, who largely attended in the morning, complained of the desertion, and with justice. We are quite convinced—the conviction has been growing for two years—that the programme should be once more arranged so as to intersperse the papers. Not that botanists should be made to listen to what they don't want to hear, but they should not be invited to desert the section, for they are likely to hear a zoological paper which will be quite as instructive and suggestive as a botanical one.

WE ARE quite unable to account for the fact that in general the Botanical Club was better attended this year than the biological section. The zoölogists were in the minority, both in number of members and number of papers. Very little can be claimed, however, for the quality of the botanical papers. With some exceptions, they showed a narrowness of observation and a superficiality of study which were lamentable. If we may assume the hortative, do let us broaden our conceptions of investigation, and when a subject is undertaken, look it from all sides, study its literature, and bring our observations and experiments to bear upon it in such a way that we reach not *a* conclusion, but *the* conclusion, and the *only* conclusion. If we do not narrow it to *that* point we lose all, and have merely our trouble for our pains.

OPEN LETTERS.

Prof. E. Hackel, on the citation of authors.[1]

If Mr. Bentham proposes the reduction of a genus to a section of another without giving a complete list of the changes in nomenclature which results from that alteration, *he is not considered* the author of any combination of names which is made by other persons adopting the reductions. For instance, Triodia acuminata, ambigua, mutica, stricta, Texana, etc., are no names of Bentham's, because you can never quote a page of his works where these names are to be found.

[1] Extract from a letter addressed to Dr. George Vasey, October, 1883.